GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5639
ANSWERED ON:30.08.2001
GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS
A.K. PREMAJAM

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the environmentalists have urged the Centre to reject the genetically modified crops in the country as had been done in Thailand; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) Greenpeace India, an environmental group had requested the Government not to approve commercial release of transgenic Bt. cotton in India.

(b) The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) set up under Rule 4 of the Rules for the Manufacture, Use, Import, Expor and Storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/Genetically Engineered Organizms or Cells 1989, considered the proposal for release of transgenic Bt. cotton submitted by Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company (MAHYCO) in its meeting held on 19.6.2001.

The GEAC observed that the data generated on large scale field trials on Bt. cotton undertaken by MAHYCO could not reflect the true values because of late sowing. It was decided that the trials be repeated on a larger scale under the direct supervision of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under their Advanced Varietal Trials of the All India Coordinated Cotton Improvement Project. In addition, GEAC has accorded approval to MAHYCO for conducting field trials on farmers` fields in an area of about 100 hectares.